



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **For Information Contact:**

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### **District Man Sentenced to 2 ½ Years in Prison For Threatening Neighbor in Dispute Over a Parking Space - Defendant Made Threats, Drove His Car Directly at the Victim -**

WASHINGTON - James J. Newton, Jr., 51, of Washington, D.C., was sentenced today to a prison term of 2 ½ years on charges stemming from a dispute in which he threatened his neighbor over a parking space, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Newton pled guilty in July 2011 to two counts of felony threats and one count of failure to appear for court. He was sentenced by the Honorable Anthony C. Epstein in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Upon completion of his prison term, Newton will be placed on three years of supervised release. During this time, he is to have no alcohol. In addition, Judge Epstein ordered Newton to pay \$200 in restitution to the victim for the property damage he caused.

According to the government's evidence, on February 4, 2010, at about 1:45 p.m. Newton illegally parked his car in the victim's driveway, after the residents had warned him not to park there. The victim, Newton's neighbor, called the police to the scene in the 1200 block of 17<sup>th</sup> Street NE, and the officers ticketed the car. Officers also concluded that the temporary license tags on Newton's vehicle had been forged and were expired. The police confiscated the tags.

When Newton returned to his car, he became enraged once he noticed his tags were missing. He barged into the house and began threatening his neighbor, who was home alone.

Among other things, Newton insinuated that he would burn down his neighbor's house. Terrified, the victim grabbed a machete and demanded that Newton leave his home. Newton ultimately returned to his car. The victim also left the house, following behind to tell the 911 operator the direction that Newton was heading. Newton then backed his car into a fence, causing property damage, and drove directly at the victim and tried to hit him with his car.

Newton narrowly missed striking the victim with his car. He was arrested a short time later and made a number of threats overheard by the officers about returning to the house to kill his neighbor, saying at one point, "Since I gotta do the time, I'm gonna give them a reason to lock me up. I'm going to go back and choke ... him." He also told the officers to check his record because he was serious about killing. The police determined that Newton had a prior conviction for manslaughter in Maryland.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen commended those who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), including Detective Randal Parker of the Fifth District Criminal Investigation Division, who led the investigation. He also acknowledged the work of Officers Gary Walker, Claude Jackson, Helen Andrews, Anthony Simms, David Evans and Larry Hale. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed his appreciation to Paralegal Kalisha Johnson-Clark, who prepared the case for indictment, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Terry Eaton, who conducted the pre-indictment investigation and prosecuted the case.

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